

**Pwyllgor Diwylliant, Cyfathrebu, y Gymraeg,
Chwaraeon, a Chysylltiadau Rhyngwladol**

**Culture, Communications, Welsh Language,
Sport, and International Relations Committee**

**Y Pwyllgor Cydraddoldeb
a Chyfiawnder Cymdeithasol**

**Equality and Social Justice
Committee**

Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP

Prime Minister

UK Government

10 Downing Street

London

3 March 2022

UK Government response to the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine

Dear Prime Minister,

We are concerned by the UK Government's response to the humanitarian crisis developing in eastern Europe as a result of the conflict in Ukraine.

We note the Home Secretary's [statement](#) on Tuesday which included plans to expand the Ukrainian Humanitarian Route scheme. Whilst this shift in policy is welcomed, it does not go nearly far enough.

As of Tuesday 1 March 2022, data compiled by [UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency](#), shows that over 660,000 people have fled Ukraine to neighbouring countries. These countries have opened their borders and welcomed Ukrainian refugees with open arms. This is in stark contrast to the approach taken by the UK Government. Sadly, this number is likely to reach many millions before the war is over.

The United Kingdom is one of the world's leading economies and previously has had a strong history of welcoming refugees and those fleeing war and persecution to the country, as well as migrants from across the world. From the arrival of the Windrush generation in the middle part of the last century, friends from south Asia in the 1960s and more recently to Afghan families seeking sanctuary from the rise of the Taliban. The UK must show that it is a humanitarian world leader.

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The geopolitical challenges in Europe today mean that we must act urgently, collectively with our European friends, to help those in need. In our view this means an expansion to what you have already announced. It means being clear to all those fleeing Ukraine that they are welcome here.

We believe your actions to date are insufficient and risk being out of step with the public mood on this issue. Opinion polling has shown that a majority of people in the UK are in favour of helping Ukrainians. We believe that you should waive all visa requirements to those who need it, and to do it now. This should be combined with an increase in humanitarian aid, beyond what's already provided.

We recognise that immigration is a reserved matter. This means that the Welsh Government has had limited involvement in the development of policies and action taken at a UK level. However, Wales is a nation of sanctuary, and the Welsh Government is responsible for a broad range of policies that support those seeking sanctuary including health and social care, housing, education, employment. It is also a key player in managing the impacts of migration and ensuring communities are cohesive. All local authorities in Wales have been involved in the resettlement of Syrian nationals through the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS) and more recently, the Welsh Government and local authorities have offered support to resettle those fleeing Afghanistan.

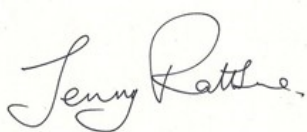
We would urge to take further steps beyond those you have already announced for the sake of our friends in Ukraine.

Yours sincerely



Delyth Jewell MS

Chair of the Culture, Communication, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations Committee of the Welsh Parliament



Jenny Rathbone MS

Chair of the Equality and Social Justice Committee of the Welsh Parliament

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.